

---

**EDRD 619      LITERACY IN THE CONTENT AREAS**

---

George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education  
College of Education and Human Development  
Secondary Teacher Education Program

Spring 2006, Sections 001 and 002 (3 credits)  
Off-Campus Location: Robinson Secondary School  
5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax, VA 22032

<b>INSTRUCTORS</b>	Alicia Hill Reading Specialist Office: Robinson Sec. School 703-426-2228 <a href="mailto:Alicia.Hill@fcps.edu">Alicia.Hill@fcps.edu</a>	Kristy Dunlap Asst. Professor, Literacy Program Office: GMU Robinson A 324 703-993-1878 <a href="mailto:kdunlap@gmu.edu">kdunlap@gmu.edu</a> 703-993-2082 fax
<i>Office Hours</i>	Robinson Secondary School: Before & after class, and by appointment Dr. Dunlap – GMU campus – Mondays, 3:00-4:00 pm	
<i>Class Meetings</i>	Tuesdays, 4:30 - 7:10 pm Robinson Secondary School, Rooms A200 & A201	
<i>Course Websites</i>	<a href="http://blackboard.gmu.edu">http://blackboard.gmu.edu</a>	Teacher Prep <a href="http://www.prenhall.com/teacherprep">www.prenhall.com/teacherprep</a>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A. Prerequisites: Methods I and II. This course is designed to be taken concurrently with EDCI 790 Student Teaching Internship or by students who are teaching English, social studies, mathematics, or sciences in grades 6 – 12.

B. This course is designed to assist students in understanding the language and literacy process as it applies to teaching in the middle and high schools. Particular attention is paid to reading and writing in the content areas and instructional strategies to support students' literacy development. The course will focus on ways in which reading, writing, speaking, and listening are developed and used within the learning of discipline-specific curriculum including adaptations for culturally diverse and exceptional learners. The course develops connections between knowledge of the literacy process, using language to support learning, and effective instruction incorporating reading and writing.

**NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY**

The course is structured around readings, reflections on those readings, class projects, discussions, activities, and participation in a series of model lessons designed to reflect strategies for the integration of literacy development and practice with the teaching/learning process. Using this collection of activities, the course seeks to build clear bridges between students' literacy development, theoretical / research perspectives, and classroom practice.

**GSE SYLLABUS STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS**

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [gse.gmu.edu](http://gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the **University Honor Code**:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting

to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly.

For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or Website at [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC\\_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

### STUDENT OUTCOMES

The following objectives have been established for the course:

1. Students will explore and explain the role of literacy in learning the content areas.
2. Students will be introduced to and use strategies that middle/high school students can apply to successfully comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate content-related texts.
3. Students will design reading and writing instruction that supports students' literacy development in middle and high school classrooms.
4. Students will create instructional goals and activities appropriate for students' active learning through interaction with print, media, and computer texts.
5. Students will develop content area curriculum that integrates reading, writing, speaking, and listening using multiple media forms throughout students' learning experiences.
6. Students will adapt instruction to accommodate secondary students' varying degrees of literacy and linguistic proficiency.
7. Students will assess print and non-print media and adapt it for effective instruction for a diverse student population.
8. Students will integrate appropriate texts for instruction into the curriculum of their respective content areas, e.g., adolescent literature, trade books, and Internet resources.

### Required Texts:

Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2004). *Improving Adolescent Literacy: Strategies at Work*. Pearson.  
[this package includes access to a website resource at no additional charge] ISBN 0132230496

Texts for specific subject area disciplines. Students will need one text pertinent to their licensure area or teaching assignment:

<i>English</i>	Gallagher, K. (2004). <i>Deeper Reading: Comprehending Challenging Texts, 4-12</i> . Stenhouse. ISBN 1-57110-384-8
<i>Mathematics</i>	Barton, M.L., & Heidema, C. (2002). <i>Teaching Reading in Mathematics: A Supplement to Teaching Reading in the Content Areas</i> . 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. McREL. ISBN 1-893476-04-9
<i>Science</i>	Barton, M.L., & Jordan, D. (2001). <i>Teaching Reading in Science: A Supplement to Teaching Reading in the Content Areas</i> . McREL. ISBN 1-893476-03-0
<i>Social Studies</i>	Allen, J., & Landaker, C. (2005). <i>Reading History: A Practical Guide to Improving Literacy</i> . Oxford University Press. ISBN 0195165969

### Recommended Texts / Professional References:

- Allen, J. (2004). *Tools for Teaching Content Literacy*. Stenhouse. ISBN 1-57100-380-5
- Buehl, D. (2001). *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning*. (2nd ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association. ISBN 0-87207-284-3

Additional readings will be provided via electronic reserve and handouts.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Attendance and In-Class Responses to Reading Assignments**

Attendance is critical; class time will provide opportunities for (1) demonstration of effective, research-based literacy strategies, (2) participation in hands-on activities, (3) discussions and analyses of research and theory on literacy, and (4) reflection on readings, class activities and assignments. Students are expected to be consistently well-prepared to participate actively in class. **Weekly.**

### **Classroom-Based Assignments**

Each student enrolled in EDRD 619 is required to complete a minimum of 15 hours of classroom work in an accredited middle/high school. During EDRD 619, this work generally occurs in the classroom where students are placed for their student teaching or internship, or the classroom of a teacher with a provisional license. The specific classroom-based assignments focus on various aspects of literacy. Class participants will:

- analyze a textbook excerpt or text sample using a readability formula
- select a passage and prepare notes for demonstrating a thinking-aloud reading comprehension process to students
- create and administer a survey or inventory to examine the literacy interests and learning behaviors of adolescents
- compile an annotated bibliography of print and non-print materials suitable for a unit of study
- describe the range of literacies in your content area by observing and focusing closely on the work of 3 representative students
- implement 4 literacy strategies in the classroom, analyze effectiveness, and reflect on revisions and adaptations
- demonstrate at least one literacy strategy tried out with your students to EDRD 619 classmates
- design a lesson for classroom implementation incorporating appropriate literacy strategies

Information about each of these assignments will be provided in class. Individual, word-processed, classroom-based assignments should be completed by the **dates specified on the class schedule.**

### **Literacy Strategy Notebook**

The Literacy Strategy Notebook is an organized resource notebook of practical ideas, effective literacy-based strategies, and lists of resources to aid planning of instruction. The intent is to create a basic collection of potentially useful strategies, activities, and resources that are literacy-based and content-related in a format that could be expanded during future teaching semesters. Suggested categories for sections and tabs: before-, during-, and after- strategies; vocabulary; prior / background knowledge; read-alouds; book lists; graphic organizers; previews or warm-ups; and information organizers. Further guidelines will be provided during the course. The Literacy Strategy Notebook is **due April 25.**

### **Position Statement on Content-Specific Literacy**

The purpose of the position statement assignment is to synthesize theory, research, and best practice from course readings, activities, and assignments into a coherent statement of philosophy and action on adolescent literacy in students' content area. The position statement may be done in several different formats, but in general, all formats should include a well-organized presentation of key points, support from theory and research, and specific recommendations for the integration of literacy strategies in the

content area. Further guidelines will be provided during the course. Responses to guiding questions for the position statement are *due April 25*, and the final position statement is *due May 9*.

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Due Dates</b>	<b>Points</b>
In-Class Responses to Reading Assignments	Weekly	50
Classroom-Based Assignments		
Text Excerpt – Readability + Reflection	Febr 14	25
Think-Aloud	Febr 21	25
Literacy Survey / Reading Inventory	Survey Draft - Febr 28 Final - Mar 14	35
Text Set with Shared Reading (+ posting on Blackboard)	Mar 7	35
Three Representative Students	Mar 21 or 28	40
Four Literacy Strategies Implementation + Analyses	May 2	40
Literacy Strategy Demonstration + Handout	Mar 14, 21, 28, Apr 4	25
Content – Specific Lesson Design	Apr 18	25
Literacy Strategy Notebook	Apr 25	50
Position Statement on Content-Specific Literacy	Response to Qs–Apr 25 Final - May 9	50
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>400</b>

It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the Secondary Education Program. Selected products from this course (content-specific lesson with literacy connection, position statement on content-specific literacy, and selected classroom-based assignments) may be included in students' portfolios for the M.Ed. program and may also become part of professional portfolios used for job placement.

### **Grading Scale**

A+	98 -100%	<p>Grades of A+, A, and A- in this course are earned by students who do exemplary, distinguished work.</p> <p>The “A” student participates actively and thoughtfully in class discussions and activities; completes all course readings and assignments in a timely and professional way; shows coherence and thoroughness in lesson planning; writes well-organized responses and strategy descriptions; consistently demonstrates the ability to make connections between theory and practice; and meets the general requirements and guidelines of the course, as listed below.</p>
A	94 - 97	
A-	90 - 93	
B+	87 - 89	
B	83 - 86	
B-	80 - 82	
C	70 - 79	
F	Below 70%	

--	--

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities pertaining to literacy in middle and high school classrooms, it is important for students to keep up with the readings and participate in class activities.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, students cannot be in class, they should make every effort to contact the instructor and leave a message. If students miss two classes, they should plan to consult with the instructor for an additional assignment or assignments. Late arrivals or early departures are considered as partial absences.
3. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students may occasionally have serious circumstances arise that prevent the completion of work by the assigned due date. If such a dilemma arises, students should make every effort to contact the instructor in advance.
4. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins.

## ELECTRONIC REQUIREMENTS

*Email:* Students must have access to email and the internet, either at home, work or GMU campus. GMU provides students with free email accounts which must be accessed for information sent from the university or the Graduate School of Education. Go to <http://mason.gmu.edu/> for information on accessing email.

*Blackboard:* Students will also be expected to access Blackboard for pertinent course documents. Blackboard can be accessed by going to <http://blackboard.gmu.edu>.

*Textbook Supplementary Website:* Students purchasing the Fisher and Frey text ISBN 0132230496 from the GMU bookstore will have access to the Merrill Teacher Prep website at no additional charge: [www.prenhall.com/teacherprep](http://www.prenhall.com/teacherprep) Technical Support is available at 1-800-677-6337.

*Electronic Reserves:* Using the following link to search Electronic Reserves: <http://oscr.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/ers/OSCRgen.cgi> Click on "Search Electronic Reserves." In "Select a Course," look in the drop down menu and select EDRD 619. In "Select an Instructor," find Kristy Dunlap. Enter the password that will be shared during a class session. Do not use spaces or caps. Click the Submit button. Read the instructions at the top, then scroll down until the article sought is located. Click on the icon to download the article. After entering your G-number, you can download and print your own copies.

## GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their ability to catch errors, it is often helpful to have another person proofread the written work. When in doubt, students should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>.

### Expectations of Students in EDRD 619:

- Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
- Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
- Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
- Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

The University Writing Center (Robinson A114) 703-993-1200 is a free writing resource open to everyone involved in the George Mason community, including graduate students. The Writing Center offers individual, group, and



online tutoring sessions in a comfortable, supportive atmosphere. GMU students may register for the On-Line Writing Lab (OWL), <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic/Learning Experiences</b>	<b>Readings and Assignments</b>
Jan 24	Introduction & Overview of Course/Syllabus <i>Introduce</i> Strategy Notebook Assignment	
Jan 31	Adolescent Literacy: Adolescents Deserve More / Issues / Classroom Practice <i>Introduce</i> Three Representative Students	<b>Read</b> Fisher & Frey, Chapter 1; <u>Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement</u> from International Reading Association <a href="http://www.reading.org">www.reading.org</a> . See agenda for details.
Febr 7	Effective Reading of Textbooks <i>Introduce</i> Text Readability Assignment <i>Introduce</i> Think-Aloud Assignment	<b>Read</b> Allington article; Content Area Supplementary Texts <b>Bring</b> Texts/Reading Materials used in your classroom
Febr 14	The Match: Students and Texts <i>Introduce</i> Text Sets / Shared Readings	<b>Read</b> Fisher & Frey, Chapter 3 <b>Due</b> Text Readability / Reflection
Febr 21	Effective Comprehension Strategies <i>Introduce</i> Literacy Survey Assignment Panel: New Teacher Colleagues	<b>Read</b> Fisher & Frey, Chapter 2 <b>Due</b> Think-Aloud Assignment
Febr 28	Effective Comprehension Strategies <i>Introduce</i> Strategy Share + Demo Date	<b>Read</b> Fisher & Frey, Chapters 4 & 6 <b>Due</b> Draft Literacy Survey – Questions / Prompts
Mar 7	Content Area Specialists Guest Presenters in each content area	<b>Read</b> Content Area Supplementary Texts - Selections <b>Due</b> Text Set with Shared Reading
Mar 14	Focus on Vocabulary <i>Strategy Share Group #1</i>	<b>Read</b> Content Area Supplementary Texts - Vocabulary Selections; Fisher & Frey, Chapter 7 <b>Due</b> Literacy Survey - Results/Reflection
Mar 21	Focus on Non-Fiction <i>Strategy Share Group #2</i>	<b>Read</b> Fisher & Frey, Chapter 5 <b>Due - Option</b> Three Representative Students
Mar 28	Effective Comprehension Strategies <i>Introduce</i> Literacy Position Statement <i>Strategy Share Group #3</i>	<b>Read</b> Fisher & Frey, Chapter 9 <b>Due</b> Three Representative Students
Apr 4	Writing to Learn <i>Strategy Share Group #4</i>	<b>Read</b> Fisher & Frey, Chapter 8; Content Area Supplementary Texts - Selections
Apr 11	<i>No class meeting</i>	
Apr 18	Putting It All Together: Designing Effective Instruction in Your Classroom <i>In Class:</i> Content-Specific Lesson Design	<b>Read</b> Ryder & Graves excerpt <b>Due</b> Content-Specific Lesson Design
Apr 25	Inner / Outer Circle – In-Class Activity	<b>Read</b> Fisher & Frey, Chapter 10 / Content texts <b>Due</b> Responses to Qs - Literacy Position Statement <b>Due</b> Literacy Strategy Notebook
May 2	<i>No class meeting</i>	<b>Read</b> Content Area Supplementary Texts; Electronic Reserves
May 9	Final Thoughts on Literacy Learners and Content-Area Literacy	<b>Due</b> Literacy Position Statement